SCHOOL FOR HOUSEWIVES

By Marion Harland

THE PARENTS' CORNER

OUT of your rich and abundant experience you will doubtless give your valuable advice in a matter which I would submit to you.

I have a daughter nearly 18 years old going to High School, where she has made the acquaintance of a young man of good family and otherwise unobjectionable, so far as I know, who seems somewhat attached to her, visiting her regularly. While we do not entirely approve of much of this sort of thing on the part of a girl of her age, and while attending school, no serious objections have been urged. This young man has sent my daughter a note inviting her to come to his house with two or three other young people, and stating that the invitation is approved and seconded by an older sister of the young man, a young lady of about 25, who acts thus in the absence of the mother. The young man in question is the only member known by my daughter. I have questioned the propriety of my daughter accepting an invitation of this kind, and she fails to understand why I should do so and seems much offended because of the stand I have taken. I think I am right, but if wrong I am open to conviction. Will you kindly give your opinion and advice in the matter?

FATHER.

You are altogether in the right. If the young man's sister joins with him in the invitation, it is her place to call upon your daughter and give it in person. Apart from your daughter's youth, the fact that her admirer does not see the obvious propriety of showing thus much respect to the girl of his choice may well make you doubtful as to the wisdom of encouraging his addresses. Many parents have to bide their time of acknowledgment from the young and ignorant creatures they would save from the consequences of their headstrong blunders.

Another man takes the floor:

YOU ask for opinions of or from mothers and girls in discussing "Her Mother and Male Callers." Can a "male" give one? If so, it is this to any and all girls: Keep your mother in the next room—awake—and the door unlocked, and put every man down for a liar till he proves himself otherwise. Because, first, that call is the first breaking of the ground on which you will raise all wheat or all thorns. Secondly, any man not a liar can soon remove the ban or stamp, especially to the girl who breaks the soil, in a way her mother could even listen to from the next room. Listen, till I tell you: I was 32 when I met a girl who fulfilled my ideal, and I was not entertained in a parlor with mother in next room, but in the sitting room with the family. That is, for the first "period" of our acquaintance. I don't want to reveal secrets, but may well relate the first experience I had after calling for six months. The conversation drifted until familiarity of young people became the topic. Then the following dialogue resulted:

Miss F.—Would you like to have me sit on your lap?

Self—Why? Would you do it?

Miss F.—If you want me to. I will tell you what I will do. You ask mamma, and if she says I can, I will.

Of course the rest can be guessed. Hope you can use this to some advantage.

J. D. R.

"Why is it that you fathers are, as a rule, so unwilling to have your daughters marry?" I asked of a man who had informed me, sorrowfully, that one of his girls was "about to leave him." "Are you more selfishly jealous than mothers? They sympathize with their girls in love affairs and lend a willing hand in wedding preparations."

"You see," answered the reluctant natural guardian, "we men know men, and you women don't."

He may have been right. It is as likely that he was in the wrong in analyzing his own emotions. Certain it is that a man's testimony in the case under discussion is worth far more than a woman's. He knows what he is talking about. As I have said before in this connection, many a happy wife and mother, looking back upon her own girlhood, sees herself treading, like the suspected Saxon Queen, between heated plowshares, but, unlike Queen Emma, unconscious of her peril. In such a time, blessed is the girl who trusts in her mother as in a guardian angel.

IN ANSWER to the invitation to give an opinion regarding "Her Mother and Her Male Callers," I thought as I read the question how little aware, seemingly, this young woman is of her great danger.

It has been said: "We seek advice, but our minds are already secretly made up as to what we will do, and a deaf ear is turned if advice does not coincide with our desires." I sincerely hope this is not true in this instance, and that the questioner will yield her inclination and heed the voice of experience and "turn down" this reformed (?) rake, and not accord him the privilege of a friend.

It is not properly her domain to be friendly and lend a hand, if that is her motive. That should be done by matrons acting in unison with their husbands. Perhaps he has been working the pity and sympathy act upon her tender heart, for as O. W. Holmes says, "There is no pity so deep as that which a tender-hearted girl feels for a lonely young man."

I say in loud tones: Beware of such a man as you describe; it is dangerous to play with fire. He has no regard for women, their virtue or their honor. He classes them all together and believes every one an easy prey. Do not take up with damaged goods and fling your soul wealth away.

Be truest woman, kind, yet shy,
Holding your birthright clear and high;
In youth or age, the crown is yours to choose,
The jewels Truth and Honor neither dim nor lose.

To this precious girl I would say: "Do not be wilful; throw him overboard, and be thankful you have a mother who has what so many mothers seem to lack these days—a feeling of watchful, brooding, tender love and care for you that would keep harm far from your unwary self. Trust her, confide in her. She is your best friend.

Many mothers who know life as it is are often exceedingly careless until some scandal stares them in the face. Then it is they realize anew that human nature is very weak and needs all the helps possible all the time, old age as well as youth, and it is criminal carelessness on their part to subject young people to needless temptation.

Many of us can say with Marion Harland: "I have not forgotten my own girlhood or the wise guardianship that I can now see saved me in many a perilous pass and preserved her self-respect to a thoughtless, giddy creature."

MRS. L. R. G.

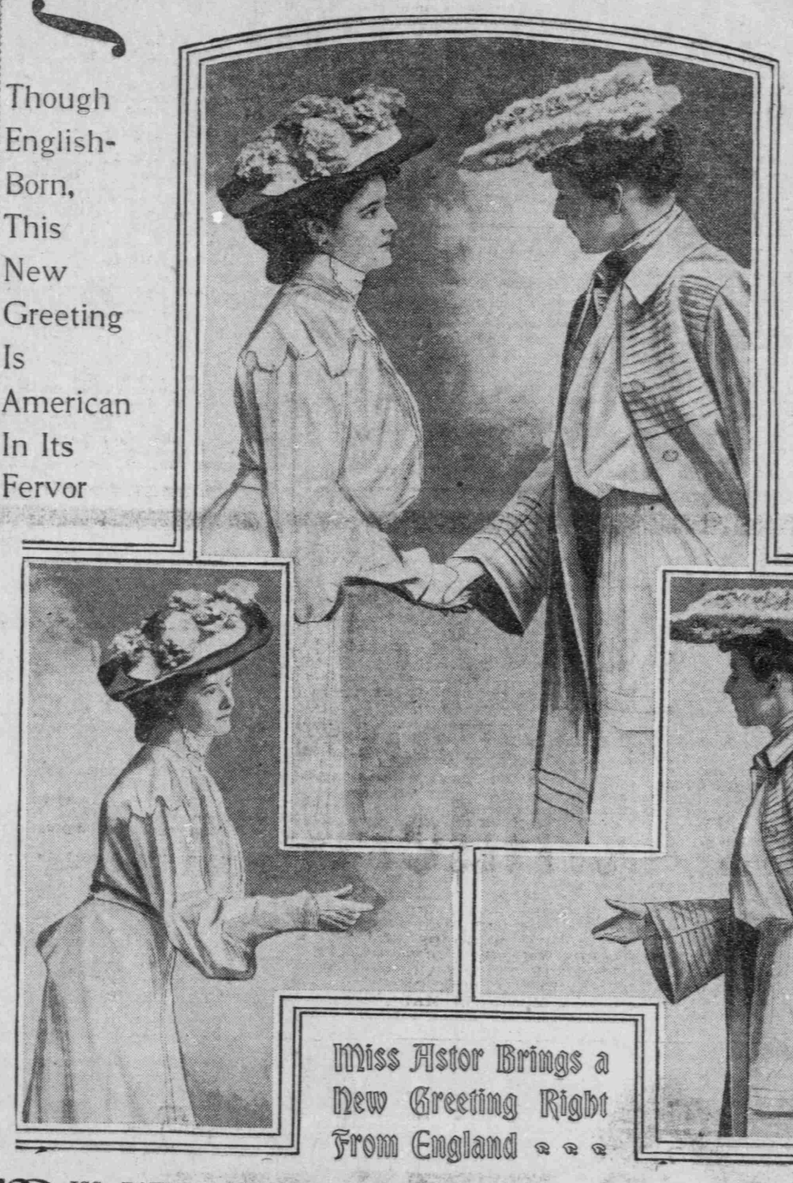
I HOPE, Mrs. Harland, you will speak at length on this subject of children studying at home. Brand it on the mind of every parent. It will be a good work. Oh, how I wish I had taken the advice I am now giving! Like many others, I thought, How could any affliction fall on my only child? My little girl was uncommonly bright. Being ambitious, I began teaching her at 3. At 4 she could read and write quite well. At 6 she attended school regularly, studied at night and worked hard, determined to master every hard lesson. I protested against home study. During her second term of school she was physically weak. I protested stoutly and determined to send the teachers a note forbidding home study. She looked up pleadingly and said: "Mamma, if I don't copy all of this the teacher will scold me and put me back. They all have to do it." The thought of my sensitive child being scolded caused me to weaken and give in. In nearing the holidays she broke down. The doctor said she was "weak and run-down." After the holidays she was apparently better, so I sent her back to school. Again she failed in health and remained at home one session. The principal sent a note demanding the reason, and continued to send notes until she returned to school. She became too weak to go regularly; they continued to send complaints and the lessons for her to copy. Often I burned them before she could see them. I was goaded on and on into sending her to school when I thought she was not strong enough to attend so regularly, and, worst of all, home study. She would lie awake at night, her nerves all unstrung, and vitality exhausted, appetite gone. Yet I did not realize the danger she was in. The first week in March she began to cough. Then came a final breakdown. All the doctors could do was of no avail. It was too late. She slowly faded away like the withering of a delicate flower. Ten months later, on January 3, she died in my arms. "Consumption," the doctors said. She had lived 8 years and 6 months, just the age at which she should have started to school.

I hope all parents who may see this will take advice and stand firmly by what is right.

A BROKEN-HEARTED MOTHER.

Miss Pauline Astor's New Handshake

Though English-Born, This New Greeting Is American In Its Fervor



Not a Finger-Touching Greeting, But a Good, Hearty Striking of Hands

Miss Astor Brings a New Greeting Right From England

MISS PAULINE ASTOR, daughter of William Waldorf Astor, of England, and heiress to untold millions, has introduced a new handshake in American society.

Briton though she be, the handclasp smacks of things American, for there is about it a degree of heartiness that is by no means typical of the Englishman.

It cannot be denied that there is some kind of charm about shaking the hand of a young woman who is destined to be the richest in the world. One needs no great stretch of imagination to realize that the dainty hand will some time have the power to sign a check that would ransom king or emperor.

Perhaps it is that fact that makes one observe with great care just how the dazzling handshake is delivered. At any rate, it is safe to assume that Philadelphia society is in a receptive mood and that Miss Astor's innovation meets with its entire approval.

The truth is society everywhere has a strong predilection for fads. It gratefully accepts whatever comes to it in this guise without taking the trouble to go into an analysis of its merits. So it was with Miss Astor's handshake. It was a fad, and society liked it. But in addition to the fact that it is the introduction of one of the most polished young women in the world, there are other features to recommend it.

There is no denying that it is a distinct improvement over the high-lifted, fastidious, finger-tipping touch with which society people have been wont to greet each other for years.

The new handclasp is no characterless, light-fingered shake, but a hearty grasp. Its exponents show the warmth of old friends greeting each other after a long separation.

The arm is extended naturally in front of the body and the hands are brought sharply together in a strong, firm clasp. It is an honest handshake. There is no indecision about it, and there is no needless effusiveness about it, either, for the hand is instantly withdrawn. It is only natural and unaffected.

Miss Astor has been visiting her uncle, Mr. James W. Paul, Jr., at his country home at Radnor. Philadelphia society leaders first witnessed the handshake, now its own by adoption, when she appeared in company with her cousin, Miss Ellen Drexel Paul, at the annual Radnor Hunt breakfast on Thanksgiving morning.

Miss Astor rode her cousin's hunter Dumnorix in the Ladies' Cup class for the best riding and jumping, but although she had style and a firm, light hand, she only captured fourth place, losing to Mrs. John R. Valentine, Mrs. Robert E. Strawbridge and Miss Josephine Mather, who won first, second and third, respectively.

It was when she was congratulating the winners that the society folk first noted the handshake, which was to them entirely new.

Miss Astor is naturally exclusive in her tastes. One indication of this is the fact that she never shakes hands with any person to whom she is first introduced. She reserves this favor for her intimate friends or when, as a good loser, she congratulates those who win from her.

The manner in which a person shakes hands is very often a strong indication of character. Miss Astor's friends say that her method is typical of her—exclusive in general, but firm in her friendships.

She is only 20 years old and has been trained in an atmosphere of exclusiveness, which in her father's home has been termed snobbishness. She is always accompanied by her French governess, Mme. Flory, who previously served as governess in the families of the French aristocracy.

Miss Astor, in her natural qualities, resembles her mother, who was the beautiful Miss Mary Dahlgren Paul, of Philadelphia. The young girl has often said that she would prefer to be an American and live in America, but her father is filled with Anglomaniac prejudice, and hates everything "Yankee," as he sneeringly calls it.

Miss Astor could not be counted as pretty, but she possesses a subtle charm that wins the hearts of all with whom she associates. She is fond of outdoor life and loves the beautiful thoroughbreds in her father's great stables. She has been reported many times to be engaged. Among others, the rich Duke of Roxburghe has sued for her hand but he failed, and the nearest Miss Astor has ever come to falling in love was with Captain H. Frazer, the "tallest and handsomest" guardsman in England.

RECIPES FOR FOUR DAINTY DISHES

A SWEET OMELET.

SOAK half a cupful of fine dry crumbs in the same quantity of warmed milk, adding a tiny pinch of soda to the milk. Beat four eggs light, and when the crumbs are soft mix all well together and beat one minute. Have a tablespoonful of butter hot in a frying pan, pour in the mixture and cook as you would any other omelet. Before taking it up cover thickly with powdered sugar, to which has been added a little powdered cinnamon. Fold upon this and serve.

You may substitute jam or jelly for the sugar.

EGG SALAD.

BOIL six eggs for fifteen minutes, then throw them into cold water, and allow them to remain there until cold. Remove the shells and cut each egg into four pieces. Place crisp lettuce leaves on a large platter, lay a piece of egg on each leaf, sprinkle lightly with salt and pour mayonnaise over all.

SARDINE SALAD.

ONE box of sardines, two bunches of celery. Mayonnaise. Drain the oil from the sardines by laying each fish on soft tissue paper, turning the sardine first on one side then on the other until the grease is absorbed by the paper. Separate and wash the celery, using only the finest whitest stalks. Cut each piece into inch lengths, season with pepper, salt and vinegar. Pile these pieces into a small pyramid upon a glass platter and lay the sardines about the base of the mound. Pour gently over all a thick mayonnaise.

SPAGHETTI WITH CHEESE SAUCE.

BOIL spaghetti tender and drain. Cook together in a saucepan a cupful of drawn butter and a half cupful of grated Swiss cheese. As soon as the cheese is melted turn the macaroni into the saucepan and stir and toss with a silver fork until thoroughly blended with the sauce. Serve at once.

HOUSEWIFE'S CORNER

A NEIGHBOR of mine, who, between ourselves, is a bit of a crank about things that ought and ought not to be eaten, has been to call on me this afternoon, and has scared me by talking about the danger of eating "canned things" that are not put up at home. She says you warned people against them a year or two ago.

Now, what I want to know is this: If we don't eat canned goods in winter what will we do for vegetables—go back to the old-fashioned ways of our grandmothers and live on such vegetables and fruits as can be kept over the winter?

Excuse pencil, please! I am laid up with a cold and write in bed. I hope you will read this, and that you will agree with me in thinking that there is such a thing as being overparticular as to what we eat and drink. St. Paul says: "Ask no questions for conscience sake," and to eat what is set before us. And, being an optimist, I cannot believe that people—manufacturers, I mean—would be wicked enough to put poison into food that is to be eaten in families. Who would have the heart to hurt innocent children? Please speak your mind on this subject without fear or favor. You are fearless enough about other subjects. I have a shrewd suspicion that you really believe too much fuss is made over a small matter. And "canned goods" do save so much trouble to

ONE BUSY HOUSEWIFE.

Penciled notes are usually consigned unread to the waste basket. I am glad that this one escaped the general doom. Being a believer in special, and what some people call "minute providences," I discern meaning in the circumstance that since I began to transcribe this letter my "John" has entered my study and silently stuck a newspaper clipping upon a spindle on the corner of my desk. It is part of an address made some weeks ago at a meeting of scientific men in New York. The speaker is Professor G. H. Winters, of Baltimore:

"The chief chemist of the Department of Agriculture has decided to investigate the methods of food preservation in this country. Only a short time ago Germany prohibited the use of borax in preserving meats. If people knew the processes which their meat underwent they would hesitate about eating so much of it. Take corned beef, for instance. A flank of beef is put in a vat filled with a solution of borax, saltpetre and hard water, and it is left to soak several weeks before ready to eat. What kind of a digestion could stand that? Almost all meats are preserved by borax. Salicylic acid, also used in preserving some things, is a powerful stomach destroyer, and there are other substances used daily by 'pure food dealers' that are equally destructive. A rigorous investigation followed by a genuine reform would vastly benefit the public health."

Our own "courteous consulting chemist" sounded a stern note of alarm with regard to the use of salicylic acid about eighteen months ago. I fancy this is the "warning" referred to by our optimistic correspondent. I cannot just now lay my hand upon the able paper prepared by our chemist. I recall distinctly the computation, founded upon actual analysis of a tablespoonful of canned fruit, that there was a dose of salicylic acid for an adult in three spoonfuls.

My attention was called to the use of this drug (useful in its place, which is not in our daily food) by the queer, rough "tang" left upon my tongue after eating some beautifully bleached Bartlett pears bought from a grocer. The same kind of pears, canned in my kitchen, were cream-colored and the syrup a clear, pale amber. The taste was so unlike that of the bleached beauties as to draw from a lively collegian the suggestion that the latter might be "chemical blondes." The home-made article was rich and bland in flavor; the other, as I have said, left a peculiar roughness on the tongue and set an edge on the teeth. The chemical blondes were subjected to the humiliation of an analysis, which fully confirmed our "C. C. C.'s" statement.

Since which time no canned fruit has ever appeared on my table. I am assured that certain brands are free from the presence of "embalming fluids," and I am willing to credit it, being as loath to believe in the native depravity of my kind as any correspondent can be.

Within the last two months I have called for and received recipes for canning corn that demand no chemical preserver. The fact that every recipe, save one, sent in demands salt or sugar in large quantities, rendering soaking a necessary preliminary to cooking, is in itself significant. I prefaced the request for recipes by the confession that I had never been able to can corn without salting it down, and that many other housewives had told me of a similar experience. Beans and asparagus, succotash, green peas—who of us puts these up in her own kitchen? The complaint—well-nigh unanimous—is that "they will not keep." Why not, when we can fruits of all kinds and tomatoes by the bushel without fear of loss? And how happens it that the vegetables I have named, which would seem to carry the elements of sure decomposition within themselves, are sold (and in tin cans) by the million dozen in our shops, costing less than cans and contents would cost us were we to succeed in "keeping" them? What is the secret of sure preservation?

I have among my papers at least one dozen formulas sent to me from different States for "scientific" canning of fruits and other perishable eatables, written by "experts." Each one calls for salicylic acid, frankly and without a thought of wrongdoing. More than one medical authority upon dietetics has not hesitated to attribute the alarming increase of kidney and gastric disorders in these United States within the last half century to the use of canned foods. Professor Winters declares salicylic acid to be a "powerful stomach destroyer." These assertions are a stout backing for a layman's conviction that we are doing our households a foul wrong in dosing where we should feed.

What are we to eat? City markets teem with green vegetables and fresh fruits all winter long. The country housemother should have carrots, turnips, potatoes, cabbage, oyster plant and celery in her bins, squashes, pumpkins and apples—blessed among fruits!—galore. And next year she can put up her own tomatoes. (By the way, tomatoes and corn mixed keep well.) Hominy, macaroni, dried peas and beans furnish an acceptable variety in domestic bills-of-fare. Evaporated peaches, pears and apples, prunes, dates, oranges, dried and preserved figs, are blood coolers and palatable, and do not owe their preservation to drugs.

Would that I could hope that any word of mine could arouse our housewives to look into this momentous matter for themselves. If chemists, doctors and government experts are in error, let statistics prove. If they are right, what is our duty?

HERE is a brace of recipes submitted to the members of the Exchange at large:

Please put a recipe in your valuable paper for molasses cakes, what is known among the Germans as "Lebkuchen."

H. T.

When you get time, will you kindly write a recipe for witch's yeast, to make bread, and how to keep the yeast from time to time?

"DAILY READER."

I AM surprised that you doubt the possibility of keeping geraniums in the cellar over winter without potting. I keep them in that way every winter, and so do my neighbors, but I do not hang them up. I stand them in a dark, cool corner with the roots down.

If the cellar has a furnace, some earth might be thrown over the roots and moistened occasionally. They should be strong, well-rooted plants.

They will sprout before it is time to take them out of the cellar. The first time I kept them I hung them up and found in the spring that the new shoots had all turned upward toward the roots.

They will look rather scraggy when first set out, but will soon become green and begin to bloom.

E. S.

I bow gratefully, if not gracefully, to the criticism, and shall make another experiment along the lines indicated by "E. S."